

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 8/16/2016	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe/ 781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? N/A
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ____ ) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ____ )			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR)  N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP  N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT?  No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY  <input type="checkbox"/> N/A    Date: <u>3/11/14, 4/8/14, 5/6/14, 6/3/14, 6/17/14, 7/15/14, 8/12/14, 9/9/14, 10/7/14, 11/4/14, 12/2/14, 12/16/14, 1/6/15, 2/3/15, 2/24/15, 3/24/15, 4/21/15, 5/19/15, 6/16/15, 7/14/15, 8/11/15, 9/1/15, 9/22/15, 10/20/15, 11/17/15, 12/15/15, 1/12/16, 2/9/16, 3/8/16, 4/5/16, 4/19/16, 5/17/16, 6/7/16, 6/21/16, 7/19/16</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW This item was prepared by the Administrative Office.			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts.			

# County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe/ 781-5011

DATE: 8/16/2016

SUBJECT: Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Background**

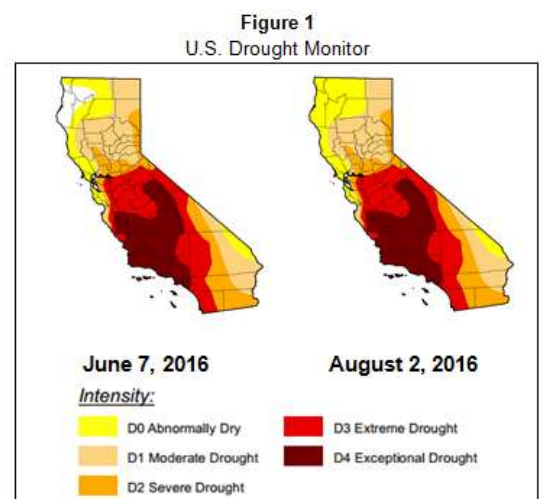
On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated. The Board also directed staff to return every 30 days to provide an update on the status of actions by the Drought Task Force, including a report on the analysis regarding local water conditions, local responses, conservation and outreach projects, and the State Water Project.

The last drought update was on July 19, 2016. Previous thirty-day updates are available at the following link:  
[http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/Drought\\_Update/County\\_Drought\\_Updates.htm](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/Drought_Update/County_Drought_Updates.htm)

The Drought Task Force continues to meet regularly to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach. The Drought Task Force prepared the Monthly Drought Update (Attachment 1) to inform the Board on current drought conditions and related management actions. Current drought conditions confirm the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Provided below is a summary of the current conditions and conservation and response efforts.

### **Current Conditions**

Much of the state remains in a severe drought or worse. The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released August 4, 2016, indicates the majority of San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 2). Approximately 59% of California is at a level D2 Severe Drought or worse with 21% of the state at a D4 intensity level. Figure 1 shows how the intensity levels throughout the state have changed in the past month.



The percentage rainfall throughout the County for the 2015-16 water year (July 2015-June 2016) ranged from 60-94% of average (Attachment 3). Reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity including: Nacimiento 29% (111,035 acre feet); Whale Rock 34% (13,278 acre feet); Lopez 26% (13,054 acre feet); and Salinas 11% (2,612 acre feet) of capacity (Attachment 4).

## Outlook

The U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook, valid for July 21 – October 31, shows most of the Central Coast still in exceptional drought, which is likely to persist. From mid-June through mid-July 2016, most changes in drought conditions have been for the worse. Seasonably dry weather should keep drought conditions intact across the California.

## Impacts

### Agricultural Conditions

Conditions within the agriculture industry reflect the continuing drought. High salinity levels accumulating in the soil caused by lack of leaching rains or flushing from irrigation continue to challenge growers. The resulting crop damage and reduced yields is especially serious for salt sensitive berry plants. Vegetable growers have reported more acreage has been left unplanted due to lack of irrigation water.

### Fire Conditions

Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service have responded to over 3,451 wildfires across the state, burning 123,100 acres. The drought across the state is about to enter its 5th year and the effect on vegetation has been severe. The past winter did result in a few heavy rains and the grass crop is heavier in many areas compared to the last 3 years. Therefore, there is an increase in fine fuel loading this year and once these grasses cure, any new start could rapidly transition into the heavier dead fuels. In 2016, abundant grass and accumulated persistent dead brush will be the primary fuels that could contribute to larger, more frequent fires compared to the previous 3 years. Above normal large fire potential is expected from August through October 2016 as shown to the right.

Figure 2  
Predictive Services – Monthly/Seasonal Outlook



### Economic Conditions

The County continues to identify assistance programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions. Information regarding drought assistance for rural homeowners has been placed on the County Drought Conditions and Water Conservation webpage. Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), delivers a number of programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions.

The Governor's Drought Task Force created an online intake form for local, state, or tribal and federal agencies to document domestic water issues. The information is intended to inform and coordinate state response and mitigate drought impacts. Both agencies and individuals can complete the reporting form. Individuals with domestic water issues are encouraged to contact County Environmental Health at (805) 781-5544 or visit the state online reporting website at <https://mydrywatersupply.water.ca.gov/report/>.

## County Facilities Usage and Conservation Actions

### Water Conservation

Water usage data for all facilities with water billing from a vendor has been entered into the Utility Manager system. Water usage status updates for the users in the Utility Manager system and the County Operations Center show a 44% reduction countywide in water usage in April 2016 from April 2013.

## Emergency Response Planning and Emergency Actions

### County Office of Emergency Services

San Luis Obispo County OES continues to coordinate with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to provide updates on the drought situation, respond to specific information requests to Cal OES, and coordinate local

emergency needs. County OES continues to participate in the statewide drought conference calls hosted by Cal OES. Specifically, County OES continues communicate the severity of tree mortality located in the county. In conjunction with the County Administrative Office, County OES has also been coordinating with local Cal Fire on issues related to tree mortality, particularly in the Cambria area. County staff has been working with staff from the Governor's Tree Mortality Task Force and local Cal Fire related to what it means to be designated a high priority county. There are 10 counties, all in the Sierras that have a high priority status.

#### Contingency Planning

County Public Health, the Public Works Department, and CAL FIRE/County Fire continue to develop plans to ensure there is adequate supply of water for firefighting and domestic water use in the event that a community does not have enough water. Water availability information from public water systems has been categorized into three categories; Watch, Vulnerable, and Critical. The information has been placed into a GIS mapping layer for contingency planning. These maps are available on all the County Fire Departments mobile data computers. During a fire, the fire commanders can use these maps to identify which water sources are reliable and draw down systems that are vulnerable.

#### Emergency Actions

The proclamation continues to provide authority for unforeseen needed actions. As also noted, proclamation provides a statement to State and Federal agencies of the seriousness of the County's situation.

The County has taken no new emergency actions specific to the drought in this reporting period.

#### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board review and receive the attached update. The update highlights the existence of continuing drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Review of this update by the Board fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary.

Note: Any regulations issued because of the local drought emergency would be subject to Board approval. The local emergency proclamation adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.

#### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT**

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a County Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: the Administrative Office, Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, County Parks and Recreation, County Fire (CAL FIRE), Agricultural Commissioner, Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, Health Agency, County Counsel, and First District Supervisor Frank Mecham. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in in regular contact with Cal OES to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with local water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant State agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

#### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track drought-related costs. As of August 4, 2016, tracked labor costs associated with the drought total \$398,521.

## **RESULTS**

Accepting the update prepared by the Drought Task Force, which establishes the existence of conditions of drought, confirms the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update from the Drought Task Force confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the County and State.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 – Monthly Drought Update
2. Attachment 2 – U.S. Drought Monitor Map
3. Attachment 3 – Rainfall and Reservoir Data
4. Attachment 4 – Local Reservoir Conditions
5. Attachment 5 – U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook